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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 9 April 1997 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

On 7 April 1997, an Israeli settler opened fire on a group of civilian Palestinians in the village of Kharabta in the West Bank, three of whom were wounded; the wounds of one of them are very serious.

Yesterday, 8 April 1997, two Israeli settlers opened fire on Palestinians in the central market of the city of Hebron, killing one Palestinian and wounding three others.

Following that, the Israeli soldiers opened fire on a Palestinian mass. They killed three civilian Palestinians named Nader Abdel Khalek Assaid, Yakoub Al Joulani and Assem Rachad Arafah and wounded 85; some of them are seriously wounded. This event took place beside Al Ibrahimi shrine in the city of Hebron in the West Bank.

At the same time, the Israeli bulldozers continue their work of digging up the land of Jabal Abou Ghenaim in East Jerusalem occupied since 1967 in preparation for establishing there a new settlement for the Israelis, violating in this way the terms of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war, despite the denunciation of these acts by the international community and its calling upon Israel to refrain from these acts through your esteemed Commission's resolutions, the General Assembly resolutions as well as similar attitudes from all the States of the world. This is a confirmation that the Government of Israel refuses any effort towards a just and comprehensive peace.

The settlers' practices, which violate the principle of the right to life of the Palestinians by deliberately killing and wounding them, as was the case yesterday and the day before yesterday, and the persistence of the Israeli Government as well as the Israeli occupation authorities in building the settlement on Jabal Abou Ghenaim in occupied East Jerusalem are in the nature of war against the peace process and destroy it completely, a situation for which the Government of Israel and the authorities occupying the Palestinian territories should bear the responsibility.

I request you to kindly circulate to the distinguished members of the Commission this memorandum as an official document under item 4 of the agenda of the fifty-third session.

(Signed) Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador